**WHAT IS A SONNET?**

A sonnet is a fourteen-line poem written in iambic pentameter (a technical term, which describes how the rhythm of poetry is measured). Each line is divided into syllables, and syllables are designated as stressed or unstressed, that is, accented or not accented in the "normal" pronunciation of the word.. "Pentameter" comes from the Greek language. ‘Penta’ means five, and ‘meter’ means measure. "Pentameter" means that there are five stressed syllables in a measure of verse.

**The Shakespearean Sonnet**

A Shakespearean sonnet is made up of three quatrains and a couplet.

A quatrain is four lines of verse; a couplet is two lines.

The rhyme scheme in a Shakespearean sonnet is ABAB, CDCD, EFEF, GG. This means that in each of the first three quatrains, the first and third lines rhyme with each other, as do the second and fourth lines. In the final couplet, the two lines rhyme with each other.

**\*\***Here is the opening line of Sonnet 12:

     x         /      x             /         x             /           x               /         x           /

**When     I      do       count     the       clock      that        tells       the      time**

**\*\***The x indicates an unstressed syllable, while the / indicates stress. There are five pairs of syllables (pentameter); the first syllable is unstressed, and the second stressed. When we have a pattern of two syllables, the first unstressed and the second stressed, that pattern is called iambic. One pair of such syllables is an iamb.

**Rhyme Scheme:**

**SONNET 130**

My mistress' eyes are nothing like the sun; A  
Coral is far more red than her lips' red; B  
If snow be white, why then her breasts are dun; A  
If hairs be wires, black wires grow on her head. B  
I have seen roses damask'd, red and white, C  
But no such roses see I in her cheeks; D  
And in some perfumes is there more delight C  
Than in the breath that from my mistress reeks. D  
I love to hear her speak, yet well I know E  
That music hath a far more pleasing sound; F  
I grant I never saw a goddess go; E  
My mistress, when she walks, treads on the ground: F  
   And yet, by heaven, I think my love as rare G  
   As any she belied with false compare. G